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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

SP - 191/82
20 December 1982
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: National Intelligence Officer for Strategic Programs

SUBJECT: Hypothetical Future Contingencies

In the USSR, the very existence of strategic weapons programs, not to mention their technical and operational details, are closely held state secrets. The Soviets believe that by maintaining a lid of secrecy on their weapons programs they can reduce the time available for Western reactions. There is, therefore, a limited, but nonetheless significant, potential for surprise in the strategic weapon arena. Following is a list of some developments which, while unlikely in varying degrees, could change some perceptions of the balance of power--some if they occur at all, others if they occur earlier than we anticipate. The list represents some things which the community is sensitized to, and which would require only ambiguous indications for policymakers to become concerned.

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